

EVALUATION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ANTOINE GUIBERT
MAY 2018



culture 21

UCLG Committee

In March 2018 Concepción began the final stages of its participation as a pilot city for Agenda 21 for culture from 2014 to 2018. It hosted a closing conference and an evaluation of the results. This report aims to highlight the pilot measures adopted in the work programme and the various activities carried out in Concepción since 2014, as well as provide a critical analysis with recommendations for the future. The assessments presented in the report are the result of several insights made in March 2018. These were taken primarily from a working session with the municipal team for culture in Concepción, as well as from discussions, observations, and exchanges with different cultural agents from the city¹.

This report was elaborated by Antoine Guibert, expert on the Pilot City programme, in collaboration with the UCLG Committee on Culture.

¹ NB: the Pilot Cities programme foresees that each city should carry out two self-assessment workshops addressing its cultural and sustainable development policies, on the basis of the Culture 21: Actions toolkit. Since the first such workshop was only held in May 2016, it has been decided to postpone the second workshop to 2020, in order to observe relevant changes.

FINAL EVALUATION



REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPCIÓN WORK PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The work programme adopted by Concepción, and implemented under the framework of the pilot city process since 2016, is composed of five (5) thematic areas, which are made up of nine (9) pilot measures.

THEMATIC AREAS	PILOT ACTIONS
Interculturality	<p>A Creation of a municipal intercultural programme, geared particularly towards Indigenous peoples</p> <p>B Creation of an education programme in schools</p>
Participative Governance	<p>A Revival of the Advisory Board</p> <p>B Adopting a Declaration on Cultural Rights</p>
Neighbourhoods	<p>A Establish neighbourhood cultural plans</p>
Creative Economy	<p>A The Concepción Creation Centre (C3) Foundation</p>
Environment and Urban Planning	<p>A Cultural mapping of natural spaces (mountains, etc.)</p> <p>B Proposal for the appropriation of public spaces (music locations)</p>



OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON MONITORING PILOT MEASURES

One of the objectives of the Pilot City project is to establish an ongoing dynamic of work and learning that will continue beyond the end of the process. Implementing the work programme and the pilot measures is an exploratory task that makes it possible to test and adjust the working areas and defined actions before they can be permanently adopted. As a result, this section presents some critical observations and recommendations for following-up on the programme in the future.

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

The observations that led to rethinking the adoption of a Declaration on Cultural Rights are relevant and deserve further reflection. Among other areas, observations focused primarily on the scope of such a declaration, as well as on its effectiveness and ability to generate real impact and change. While the Declaration is a possible tool for promoting work on cultural rights, it should be stressed that there are other potential instruments for this. It is vital to understand that the challenge is not only guaranteeing the cultural rights of citizens with a declaration or binding letter by the municipal administration, but also guaranteeing the full and real exercise of these rights, which involves active policies, incentives, and multiple public services. It is therefore necessary to promote an overall view on this issue, to analyse the different social, territorial, economic, or other factors that may influence the respect and exercise of cultural rights. The adoption of a Declaration could be considered both a first step and a tool within a set of other measures necessary for the respect and promotion of cultural rights. The city is advised to adopt various instruments, as well as to fully integrate cultural rights into all its programmes and lines of municipal action.

Of course, this is a new issue and few municipal administrations have yet to implement instruments on cultural rights. Therefore, there is still a need to develop many lines of action in this field, and it is necessary for Concepción to find the instruments that best respond to their own reality. The experiences of other cities that work with the Agenda 21 for culture could inspire new practices in Concepción. It was recommended that activities carried out by Mexico City be reviewed, particularly with respect to the January 2018 *Law of Cultural Rights for Citizens and Visitors of Mexico City*.

PARTICIPATIVE AND HORIZONTAL GOVERNANCE

The Declaration on Cultural Rights strives to promote more horizontality between the municipality and civil society organizations in the governance of the city, as well as to encourage more involvement, ownership, and commitment by civil society in cultural action. Some cities, such as Vaudreuil-Dorion, Canada, have adopted a declaration signed jointly with several of the territory's organisations. The declaration functions as a tool for coordination, commitment, and horizontal work (See for example the public report by Vaudreuil-Dorion on "[Reinventing the System of Governance of Culture](#)"). In this area also, it is necessary for Concepción to find instruments that adapt as best as possible to its own reality.

The pilot measure to revive the Advisory Council has yielded positive results. We recommend ongoing work in this area, as well as a reliance on this authority to continue building more participatory and horizontal governance. During a meeting with the municipality's cultural team, there was a proposal to develop a more formal platform for Advisory Council sessions. This approach could be broadly open to civil society, including neighbourhood councils and the social sector, among others. Overall, generating horizontal and participatory governance is an issue that could be addressed by the Advisory Board through its collective reflection and input. These initiatives could be linked to the creation of the Department of Culture scheduled for the end of 2018.

DECENTRALISED GOVERNANCE

Establishing neighbourhood cultural plans seems to have provided positive results and is an innovative practice that warrants praise. If these plans have helped us to better understand the desires and needs of the different neighbourhoods, then such action should continue in this area by involving neighbourhoods in the horizontal and participative governance of the city. For example, this could take place through neighbourhood associations. Several cities have discussed the concept of "horizontal cooperation" to establish collaboration and horizontal work between different areas of the region. These may involve different neighbourhoods, but may also be between different communities or other levels of government. The experiences of other cities that work with the Agenda 21 for culture could inspire new practices in Concepción. Specifically, we recommend an examination of the activities carried out in Lyon, France under the Charter of Cultural Cooperation. This platform brings the city of Lyon together with several of its suburban communities in a horizontal approach (see [our page on Good Practices](#)).

INTERCULTURALITY AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Work with the migrant communities of Concepción seems to have had positive results and generates a good dynamic of work and collaboration. We recommended

continuing support for the programme. The experiences of other cities that focus on interculturality could inspire new practices in Concepción. The city is advised to refer to activities carried out in Vaudreuil-Dorion, Canada under the “I am...” programme, specifically the Mosaic parade (see [our page on Good Practices](#)).

MAPUCHE CULTURAL RIGHTS

The municipality of Concepción has demonstrated significant political courage through its outreach work with Mapuche communities, and adopting pilot measures in this area. This is especially true given the national context of strong tensions between public authorities and the Mapuche peoples. While this has made work difficult, it seems to confirm the need to continue developing this area even further. Considering past and present conflicts between public authorities and Indigenous peoples in Chile, it is clear that building a relationship based on trust and collaboration will be a long and arduous task. The short time it has taken to implement the pilot measures should therefore be considered the start of a longer process. This should not discourage cultural groups when it comes to continuing their work in this area.

Although it may appear slow and expensive, this outreach programme is essential to establishing a relationship of trust, and to creating stable foundations that will facilitate more in-depth and fruitful work in the future. The project’s focus on Mapuche symbols is a unique way of promoting recognition and respect towards the city’s Indigenous peoples. This approach plants seeds that will sprout future trust. However, work with symbols is sensitive, requiring tact and respect so as to avoid unintended cultural appropriation. For this reason, it is important to carry out activities for the Mapuche peoples based on their perspectives, while building bridges and fostering exchanges with the rest of the population. The willingness to create an intercultural programme is very valuable. It can also be balanced with the recovery, transmission, vitality, and transformation of the cultural expressions and identities of the Mapuche peoples themselves. Indeed, there are different perspectives and goals within the various Mapuche communities and organisations across the city. A diversity of opinions and perspectives is inherent in every society, and Mapuche groups do not constitute a single entity with only one world view. As in Western society, cultural management has adapted to the diversity of very different expressions, from conventional to urban or street expressions. It is necessary to be able to work with a diversity of Mapuche organisations throughout the city.

Despite only being the beginning of a project that involves outreach with the city’s Mapuche communities and organisations, overall, implementing pilot measures on interculturality has had a positive effect. Participants recommended continuing down this path, establishing a work programme in this area, and hiring the necessary human resources to achieve more positive results. Perhaps integrating members of

Indigenous communities with the culture team could foster trust and collaboration between Mapuche organisations and the city. Finally, work focused on schools must be developed further and the practices of other cities in this area could be of interest to Concepción. One example includes an examination of the “Werken” (School Work) project in Talca, Chile.

A MODEL FOR HORIZONTAL AND PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

The participatory management model of C3 fundamentally shifts the traditional relationship between the municipal administration and the cultural and collective civil society managers towards more horizontal and direct participation. This management model has proven to give very positive results and is undoubtedly an exemplary practice that could inspire other management models in the city. The experience began at C3 in 2016, and since then it has resulted in a number of rich experiences. These could be replicated and adapted for other areas and contexts, such as in the city’s other cultural centres or neighbourhoods.

STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF ALL CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL LIFE

Surveys conducted in various neighbourhoods revealed that many residents were not particularly interested in culture. It is quite common that there is a certain disconnect between residents and cultural events that are traditionally perceived as elitist, particularly with forms of expression that are sometimes distant and inaccessible. In response to this broad observation, the city is advised to establish a strategy to reduce this sense of alienation, and to connect cultural actions with the residents of the city. The culture team intends to work to develop local spots for cultural events in order to reach out to people. Concepción is also advised to explore various tools and practices in the area of cultural mediation, which have proven to be very successful in other territories. From explaining works, to more advanced co-creation practices between artists and citizens, these cultural mediation tools empower citizens as true actors and carriers of culture. Partnerships with local organisations, such as sports clubs or community associations, make it easier to reach already established neighbourhood groups. The practices of other cities that work with these tools could inspire new practices in Concepción, too. The city is particularly encouraged to examine the activities carried out in Montreal, Canada around cultural mediation and in Vaudreuil-Dorion, Canada through the “I am...” programme. (See [our page on Good Practices](#)).



CONCLUSION

The work programme and the pilot measures implemented in Concepción are extensive and the work carried out since 2014 merits attention. The breadth of the programmes and activities carried out in such a short time is impressive. Above all, the city stands out for its willingness to generate new frameworks for collaboration and governance that foster an independent and dynamic cultural life. As highlighted in the final seminar, thanks to this intensive and active local work, Concepción is now among the most dynamic cultural cities in Latin America. It serves as an example for all cities that wish to work with Culture 21 Actions.

In conclusion, as one participant in the seminar noted, Concepción's experience demonstrates that co-management, participation, and participatory horizontal governance is a utopia that can be achieved. Through its pragmatism and conviction, Concepción is trailblazing new paths in cultural management and cultural policies. These experiences constitute benchmarks for inspiring other cities both in South America and around the world.



CONTACTS

For more information on this exercise, please contact:

» **City Council of Concepción**
Email: mcastro@concepcion.cl
Web: www.concepcion.cl

» **United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) - Committee on culture**
Email: info@agenda21culture.net
Web: www.agenda21culture.net



